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466 *Labour Conditions: Recent Socialist Legislation.*—Previous to the Revolution the economic conditions of the working classes in the Caucasus had left much to be desired. During the first decade of the present century the organisation of unions and their subsequent action had caused the employers, particularly foreign, to concede a number of amelioratory measures, such as the construction of model houses, schools, public libraries, baths and hospitals. The conditions of living on the petroleum fields was less satisfactory than those of the mining-regions, and it was at Baku that the labouring classes were most unsettled. In the summer of 1914 some very significant strikes took place. The demands of the men included better housing, improvement of sanitary conditions of dwellings, a month's holiday each year on full pay, the abolition of overtime and piece-work, etc., etc. It was difficult to foresee to what results the strikes would have led had they continued. At the beginning of war, however, the strikes suddenly came to an end by the men resuming work.

466 578 563 On the outbreak of the Russian Revolution Baku proved to be one of the centres of industrial extremism, and when the Bolsheviks seized power in the autumn of 1917 a Soviet administration was established in the oil-fields which endured until the middle of 1918. With the Turkish occupation the conservative oil-magnates were restored to power, and, basing their policy on the principles of Turan and Islam, they were successful in obtaining the support of the Tatar workmen against their Armenian and Russian fellows. The differences between the Mussulman and Christian elements continued to divide the proletariat of the oil-fields, and the hostility of the Armenian and Russian workmen towards the Tatar Government was one of the factors favourable to the re-establishment of a Russian Bolshevist régime.

466 563 In Georgia, where the industrial element was weaker, the tendency towards extremism was less marked. The Social Democrats indeed had to base their policy on the support of the peasants who, secure in the possession of their land, evinced little sympathy for any other principles of social evolution. A series of regulations establishing workmen's committees to participate in the management of concerns, regulating wages in accordance with the cost of living, guaranteeing security of employment and imposing State arbitration in the case of disputes, were the only modifications of the former industrial organisation which the Social Democratic Government introduced. This moderation in industrial legislation, combined